Volunteer Management Advocacy Kit

U Serve Utah
Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism

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Educate. Engage. Inspire. Act. Advocate.

The profession of volunteer management is often undervalued. Its limitless benefit often overlooked. However, as volunteer managers, we know that without this profession, volunteer programs across the world would struggle to meet their full potential and likely would suffer due to lack of structure, guidance and the skill and knowledge a trained volunteer manager provides. This kit offers strategies, tools, resources and connections to equip volunteer managers to advocate for their profession.

Commit to Professional Development

Continue to expand upon your education and skills through volunteer management trainings, keeping up with new and emerging trends, exploring new helpful tools and resources for volunteer managers, and earning your volunteer management certification. Subscribe to industry newsletters, blogs, publications to stay abreast on what's happening in the profession.

Coordinate a volunteer management training

Across Utah, volunteer managers help shape the success of an organization, relying on unique, highly developed skills and tools in government agencies, private industry, and mission driven/nonprofit organizations. However, many volunteer managers are not always given the training and tools necessary to improve their effectiveness and results. This is where UServeUtah can help. Skilled trainers are available across the state to deliver volunteer management training to nonprofit managers and staff that regularly work with volunteers. Training can improve volunteer recruitment and supervision efforts, provide tools to more effectively place volunteers, help organizations better leverage volunteer capacity, address problems, and provide more rewarding experiences for volunteers. The statewide training schedules can be found on http://heritage.utah.gov/userveutah/u-serve-utah-calendar

Become a certified volunteer management trainer

The Volunteer Management Trainer Certification (VMTC) offers volunteer center managers and volunteer coordinators the opportunity to become certified Volunteer Management Trainers, delivering Volunteer Management Training modules throughout the state to nonprofits. Volunteer Management Trainers receive specialized training which prepares them to conduct trainings to help nonprofits cultivate better volunteer management practices in Utah. Volunteer Management Training Certification could be for you. http://heritage.utah.gov/userveutah/volunteer-management

Expand your knowledge and skills — on-line or on-the-ground

Are there areas in which you can expand your knowledge and skill level? Whether you are interested in attending an international conference on volunteerism or you'd like to log in from your desk to learn some new skills, continuing your professional development through learning opportunities is important. Search out and participate in trainings, webinars, volunteerism conferences and workshops that allow you to keep growing in your career as a Volunteer Manager. Choose the opportunity that most fits your interest, time availability and needs. The more informed and up-to-date you are on current trends in volunteer management, resources and tools, the more successful you will be in achieving your goals.

Utah has an abundance of opportunities for you to improve your skill set:

- Each year UServeUtah hosts Conferences on Service with workshops and keynotes targeted to improving volunteer management skills. Check userve.utah.gov
  for dates and locations.
- The Utah Nonprofit Academy provides an array of trainings specifically for nonprofits. They have a list of classes on their website, and if the class you require is not listed, call and they will help you find the class you need. www.utahnonprofits.org
- The University of Utah Nonprofit Academy for Excellence http://continue.utah.edu/nonprofit is designed for managers, staff, volunteers, and trustees of Utah's nonprofit community. The Academy offers a meeting place for dedicated professionals seeking training and development in the area of nonprofit management and the opportunity to share ideas and strategies and build relationships that last beyond the classroom.

Additional organizations that offer excellent web-based professional development opportunities, listings and resources:

www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/learningcenter
www.handsonnetwork.org
www.techsoup.org
www.nationalserviceresources.org
www.idealist.org/info/VolunteerMgmt
www.energize.com

GET THE FACTS

Statistics, research & reports

Independent Sector
Independent Sector is the leadership forum for charities, foundation, and corporate giving programs committed to advancing the common good in America and around the world. It serves as the meeting ground for America's charitable and philanthropic leaders and sponsors ground-breaking research, fights for public policies that support a dynamic, independent sector, and creates unparalleled resources. independentsector.org

The AARP Research Center
The AARP Research Center provides national and state-based research on the needs, concerns and interests of midlife and older adults. aarp.org/research

Reimagining Service
Reimagining Service is a self-organized community of individuals from nonprofits, government, and the private sector that is inspired by the renewed call to service. Here you will find resources including the Nonprofit Service Enterprise Research Summary conducted by Deloitte, Corporate Service Enterprise Research Summary by Commongood Careers, and Nonprofit and Corporate Diagnostic Tools developed by Taproot Foundation. reimaginingservice.org

Reinventing Aging
The Harvard School of Public Health—MetLife Foundation Initiative on Retirement and Civic Engagement—has launched a media campaign using news coverage, advertising and prime-time entertainment programming to promote healthy aging, reshaping cultural attitudes toward the older years, and encouraging Boomers to volunteer their time, skills and experience to help strengthen communities. The campaign is an outgrowth of a report published by the Initiative in 2004: Reinventing Aging: Baby Boomers and civic engagement. Reinventingaging.org

Visualization Tools

Axiis

Axiis is an open source data visualization framework designed for beginner and expert developers alike, providing both pre-built visualization components as well as abstract layout patterns and rendering classes that allow you to create your own unique visualizations. Axiis is under an MIT license which means you can use it for personal projects, commercial work, and pretty much anything you can think of with no restrictions, so long as you keep the product's copyrights and license within the code. axiis.org

Wordle

Wordle is a toy for generating "word clouds" from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. The images you create with Wordle are yours to use however you like. You can print them out, or save them to the Wordle gallery, use to demonstrate key words/concepts or simply share with colleagues. wordle.net.

Google Analytics

Google Analytics is the enterprise-class web analytics solution that gives you rich insights into your website traffic and marketing effectiveness. With the information gained from Google Analytics, you're more prepared to write better-targeted messaging, strengthen your outreach initiatives and better engage your audiences. google.com/analytics/

ClickHeat

ClickHeat is a visual heat map of clicks on an HTML page, showing "hot" and "cold" zones of a web page that represent which spots users click on most and which spots are being ignored. ClickHeat is an open source software released under the GPL license and is free of charge. makeuseof.com/tag/get-click-heatmaps-for-your-website-with-clickheat/

Develop Your Visual Message
An example of Wordle, a visualization tool representing the frequency and importance of certain words in a topic.

Keep open dialogue with decision makers

Establish a regular schedule for check-ins with your supervisor or organization leaders to keep them informed on your successes and challenges. It will help them better understand your role and what you need to achieve the best results.

Customize your communication

Different audiences respond to different communication approaches and messages. Learn what is important to each of your audiences and then customize your messages to align with their concerns. Position your organization's volunteer program successes in unique ways to capture the attention of your target audience. Design your messages to include storytelling, economic impact, volunteers as donors, impact on mission, statistics, community outreach and public relations.

Talk the talk

Reimagining Service (see page 3 sidebar) has established four principles to creating a Service Enterprise, a nonprofit or for-profit organization that fundamentally leverages volunteers and their skills to successfully deliver on the social mission of the organization. Let the principles guide your presentation to executives and stockholders to support and foster the success of your program. Find more detail on these principles at reimaginingservice.org.

- Principle 1: Make volunteering fundamental, not an add-on.
- Principle 2: Volunteering changes the core economics of organizations.
- Principle 3: Don't let supply dictate your volunteer programs.
- Principle 4: In order to get a return, you have to invest.

You can also support your message with volunteerism data from independentsector.org.

Develop your visual message

Think outside the box when delivering your strategic message to your audience. Visualization tools often help a message better permeate the audience. Explore visualization tools to support your messaging. For example:

- Create a custom Google Map to represent communities across your state and your program impacts.
- Develop a pie chart to represent how volunteer time is spent
- Design a bar or line graph to demonstrate the impact of your program in the past five years.

Marion Palmer receives the Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award from Lt. Governor Greg Bell at the 2011 Conference on Service.

Celebrate and recognize success

Be the cheerleader for your volunteer program and its great accomplishments. If you're not excited about your successes, who will be? Recognize your volunteers. Make your successes known to those most closely invested in your organization and invite them to participate in your events and celebrations!

Create an arsenal of achievement

Collect stories, photos, evaluation feedback, media coverage, etc. to have readily available to use on the web, social media, marketing, newsletters, annual reports and beyond. Don't forget to inform your internal organization audience by submitting stories to be included in newsletters, annual reports and other shareholder and supervisor communication. Remember to include UServeUtah on your submission list — we always strive to include stories on volunteerism throughout the state along with a special feature on national service stories.

Create a volunteer recognition process or event

If you don't already have one, create a volunteer recognition process or event. Not all volunteers want to be recognized in a grand way – some volunteers prefer a handwritten card on their desk, and others feel most appreciated with an award at a grand event. Understanding your volunteers and how they would prefer to be recognized is a vital element to consider when designing a volunteer recognition process. If you opt for a large scale event, this is a perfect opportunity to not only give gratitude to the invaluable volunteers who dedicate themselves to your cause, but to also highlight the successes of your volunteer program and the positive impacts it has on your organization.

Involve staff, board members, stakeholders in recognition

Oftentimes we forget to invite those nearest to us to participate in our activities and events. Remember to invite those with a vested interest in your organization including staff, board members and stakeholders. Volunteer recognition events are excellent opportunities for these key individuals to gain greater understanding of your volunteer program and become more connected with it. These events don't need to cost a fortune. Leverage partnerships and in-kind donations to create the most cost conscious recognition events. Trainings about developing cost-efficient recognition events are available. Visit userve.utah.gov for upcoming training events and recognition ideas.

Recognize your volunteers

Here are some ideas…..

Nominate a volunteer for one of the prestigious awards given at one of the Conferences on Service in your region. These awards recognize outstanding volunteers and organizations throughout the state. Nominate your outstanding volunteer for one of these awards on http://heritage.utah.gov/userveutah/ state-and-regional-awards-program

The Lt. Governor's Volunteer Recognition Certificate program recognizes Utah residents who demonstrate exemplary volunteer service to their community. Organizations can nominate their volunteers online at any time. One volunteer will also be chosen bi-monthly to be highlighted on the UServeUtah website. For nomination details, http://heritage.utah.gov/ userveutah/on-going-volunteer-recognition-certificate-program

Celebrate National Volunteer Week by honoring your volunteers with a special event or gesture. Check Points of Lights Institute for more information on these dates. pointsoflight.org

Give a heartfelt handwritten card to show your thanks to your volunteers. Tell them how much their work impacts the organization and how much they are appreciated.

Plan an internal recognition party, invite staff and volunteers to gather for a fun filled event to honor the volunteers. Whether a barbecue, happy hour outing or catered lunch, be sure the volunteers feel appreciated.

Create a Volunteer Wall of Fame where you recognize volunteers within your building. Feature the volunteers' pictures along with a few sentences about them and their role with the organization.

Include a volunteer recognition page on your website that features volunteers with photos and short bios, information on what they do for your organization, and opportunities for others to become involved with your volunteer program.

Network and Support

UServeUtah
Get involved! The Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism is comprised of 17 governor-appointed commissioners from Utah. You could also serve as a member on one of many organizational and programmatic committees. userve.utah.gov

Volunteer Centers
Volunteer Centers act as the local "volunteer hub" where organizations and citizens are connected for meaningful volunteer work that contributes to the solution of community problems. These centers place volunteers with organizations throughout their communities and have a set geographical boundary service area. userve.utah.gov

ALIVE
The Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (ALIVE) is a national membership organization of leaders and professionals in volunteer engagement. ALIVE serves to enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteering in America by fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy for leaders in community engagement. volunteeralive.org

Blogs & Wikis
Blogs are intrinsically opinionated, so search out the ones that speak to you. Wikis serve as a hub for collaborative dialogue among visitors. Energize, Inc. offers a great list of blogs and wikis focused on volunteer leadership. energizeinc.com/prof/blogs.html

Cyber VPM
Cyber VPM is the international discussion group for volunteer managers. Debate the topic of the moment, share resources, get answers to your volunteer management questions and find a community of support for challenges and triumphs unique to volunteer management. groups.yahoo.com/group/cybervpm/

Find your networks and support
Connect with other professionals in the volunteer management field. These connections help facilitate the free flow of ideas and equip you with relationships that enhance your job performance and capacity. Build face-to-face relationships along with social network connections. When our networks become stronger, we become stronger as individuals.

Connect with volunteer managers in your area
Find and connect with fellow volunteer managers throughout your local area and the state.   Find these connections through local volunteer centers or through professional organizations like the Utah Nonprofits Association, or the Corporate Volunteer Council (through the HandsOn Network).

Collaborate and share ideas
Learn from one another and work to align your advocacy strategies with one another to strengthen your message of the importance of volunteer management. When volunteers are able to create an open dialogue amongst themselves, when experience and knowledge can be shared freely, it can result in more well-rounded outcomes.

UServeUtah maintains an updated list of volunteer centers throughout Utah. You can access this list by visiting: http://heritage.utah.gov/userveutah/volunteer-connector-organizations

Become a representative of your organization and its volunteer program by getting involved with community groups, boards, and committees. Serve as a resource for community members in your volunteer management role. Your closer ties to the community will allow unique opportunities to educate and advocate for volunteer managers.

Connect on the Web
Be sure to keep up-to-date with news, events and happenings in Utah's volunteer management community. The success of the volunteer management profession relies on you taking an active role in its growth which includes forming and maintaining dynamic relationships throughout the field. Share your own knowledge and gain from others expertise.

- Connect to individuals, organizations, and causes through social media
- Comment on news articles and blogs and contribute to wikis
- Share your event photos with the media
- Join relevant discussion groups or listservs
- Sign up for the UServeUtah newsletter and connect on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/userveutah.

ACTION LIST

Use this list to help complete the action steps discussed in the previous sections:

Commit to Professional Development	Keep Open Dialogue with Decision Makers	Celebrate and Recognize Successes	Find Your Networks and Support
1 Find out more about the UServeUtah Volunteer Management Training http://heritage.utah.gov/userveutah/u-serve-utah-calendar	**1** Keep a regular schedule of check-ins with your supervisors and organization leaders to keep them informed of your program's successes.	**1** Ask your volunteers to send you a story of service. Collect stories and photos to use for marketing purposes or to send to the media. Remember to get the appropriate permissions!	**1** Find the volunteer managers network in your area and attend a meeting. These organizations provide great opportunities to connect with other volunteer managers in your area.
2 Consider becoming a Volunteer Management Certified Trainer through the UServeUtah Volunteer Management Train-the-Trainer Certification. http://heritage.utah.gov/userveutah/volunteer-management	**2** Develop a strong message customized to each of your audiences. Remember to include what will be important to them, from storytelling to economic impact.	**2** Write thank you cards or plan a recognition luncheon. Whatever you choose, find a way to recognize your volunteers on a regular basis.	**2** Visit volunteers.utah.gov to find the volunteer center in your area. Connect with that volunteer center and find opportunities to network with nonprofits, community groups, corporations, and institutions of higher learning in your area.
3 Set up a face-to-face meeting with someone in the human resources department or marketing department and find out more about their role within your organization.	**3** Strengthen the structure of your message by visiting reimaginingservice.org and exploring the four principles listed, then aligning your message accordingly.	**3** Have a volunteer recognition event coming up? Send special invites to your organization's leaders, your supervisors, stakeholders and board members.	**3** Join listservs, follow relevant blogs, contribute to wikis. Make sure you're connected with the people, organizations and agencies engaged in volunteerism and civic engagement.
4 Find a training opportunity at the Utah Nonprofits Association that interests you and sign up! Find these trainings at any of the great sources listed above.	**4** Help convey your message and keep your audience's attention by including visual elements in your presentation such as graph, maps and wordles.	**4** Ensure that your volunteers feel appreciated by celebrating National Volunteer Week. Also, be sure to nominate one, or several of them for special recognition through the Lt. Governor's Recognition Certificate Program. userve.utah.gov	**4** Connect with UserveUtah! Follow us on Facebook and visit our website to join our email list. These are all ways to keep up-to-date with news and happenings in Utah's volunteerism community.

Thank you to the Commission for Voluntary Action and Service in the State of Oregon, and UServeUtah partners for assisting in the development of this kit.

Helpful Links

www.energizeinc.com
Energize, Inc. is an international training, consulting, and publishing firm specializing in volunteerism and strengthening volunteer programs.

www.idealist.org
Idealist is an interactive web site where people and organization can exchange resources and ideas, locate opportunities and supporters, and take steps toward building a world where all people can lead free and dignified lives.

www.independentsector.org
Independent Sector is the leadership forum for charities, foundations, and corporate giving programs, committed to advancing the common good in America and around the world.

www.nationalserviceresources.org
The Resource Center, for the Corporation for National and Community Service is the best source for connecting service programs with targeted training & info.

www.networkforgood.org
Network for Good makes it easy to donate and volunteer online, keeping it simple and affordable for nonprofits of any size to recruit donors and volunteers via the Internet.

www.pointsoflight.org
Points of Light Institute includes three business units—HandsOn Network, MissionFish, and Civic Incubator. Their mission is to inspire, equip and mobilize people to take action that changes the world.

www.serve.gov
This website, managed by the Corporation for National and Community Service, is a comprehensive clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities and online resources.

www.serviceleader.org
Serviceleader.org offers specialized resources for volunteers, leaders and manager of volunteers, and instructors and thought leaders.

www.techsoup.org
This website offers nonprofits a one-stop resource for technology needs by providing free information, resources, and support.

www.worldvolunteerweb.org
The World Volunteer Web, hosted by the United Nations Volunteers program, supports the volunteer community by serving as a global clearinghouse for information and resources linked to volunteerism that can be used for campaigning, advocacy, and networking.

THE UTAH COMMISISON ON SERVICE & VOLUNTEERISM or USrveUtah is an office of the Lt. Governor and is committed to promoting excellent volunteer management, national service, and volunteerism throughout the State of Utah.

We work diligently to deliver a best-practices volunteer management training program with consistent, up-to-date information and trends in volunteer management from across the nation.

We strive to promote and recognize individuals and organizations involved in volunteerism and civic engagement.

As a convener, catalyst, educator, and advocate, we work to engage citizens in service and strengthen our Utah communities.

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userve.utah.gov

Connect with us on facebook
facebook.com/utahcov

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